

# the gospel[L]ived

What makes you a sexually faithful spouse, a generous—not avaricious—person, a good parent and/or child is **not just redoubled effort** to follow the example of Christ. Rather, it is **deepening your understanding of the salvation of Christ** and living out the changes that understanding makes in your heart—the seat of your mind, will, and emotions. Faith in the gospel restructures our motivations, our self-understanding and identity, and our view of the world. It changes our hearts. Behavioral compliance to rules without heart-change will be superficial and fleeting.

—Tim Keller, *Gospel in Life* (26)

What both justification and sanctification have in common is that they take place through faith in Christ. “**The Bible teaches that we are sanctified by faith.**” By faith we find God more desirable than anything sin offers. By faith we continue to be united to Christ, the source of our new life. By faith we embrace the new identity that is ours by grace. By faith we follow the new desires of the Spirit... 'Holiness is nothing but **the implanting, writing and realizing of the gospel in our souls.**'

—Tim Chester, *You Can Change* (63-64)

The gospel is so foolish (according to my natural wisdom), so scandalous (according to my conscience), and so incredible (according to my timid heart), that it is a daily battle to believe the full scope of it as I should. There is simply no other way to compete with the forebodings of my conscience, the condemnings of my heart, and the lies of the world and the Devil than to **overwhelm such things with daily rehearsings of the gospel.**

—Milton Vincent, *A Gospel Primer* (14)

## Proclaiming the Gospel to Yourself

1. How do most Christians go about the work of personal transformation (what is often called “sanctification”)?
2. Read Ephesians 4:17-19. What reasons are given for sin in the life of the unbeliever?

What do all of these concepts have in common? In other words, where does sin come from; what are its origins?

3. Read Ephesians 4:20-21. What words and phrases does Paul use to describe how the process of change begins?

What do all of these concepts have in common? In other words, where does transformation come from; what are its origins?

In light of these verses, what makes Christians different from non-Christians?

4. Read Ephesians 4:22-24. Having established the “intellectual” foundation for change, how does Paul describe the actual process of transformation?

How does Paul’s description of the “old self” relate to the way he describes non-Christians in vv. 20-21? What does this teach us about our struggles as believers?

5. Reread the Milton Vincent quote from the top of page one. Milton describes the renewing of our minds as “a daily battle to believe the full scope of [the gospel] as I should.” He says this struggle takes place because the gospel often appears foolish, scandalous, and incredible. Which of these three challenges to belief do you struggle with most? Why?

Practically speaking, how can you “overwhelm” the “forebodings of [your] conscience, the condemnings of [your] heart, and the lies of the world and the Devil” by daily rehearsing the gospel?

What is one specific truth of the Gospel that would be beneficial for you to “rehearse” this week?